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Agenda

Research and Sponsored Initiatives

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

11:40 AM

Claiborne Building, 1st Floor ▪ Thomas Jefferson Rooms A&B (1–136)
1201 N. Third St. ▪ Baton Rouge, LA 70802

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Conversion of Endowed First-Generation Scholarship to Endowed Two-Year Workforce Scholarship: Northshore Technical Community College
- IV. Board of Regents Support Fund (BoRSF) Plan and Budget, FY 2026–27
- V. Funding for BoRSF Multi-Year Contracts and Federal Matching Commitments
- VI. Other Business
- VII. Adjournment

Committee Members: Stephanie A. Finley, Chair; Wilbert D. Pryor, Vice Chair; Ted H. Glaser III; Dallas Hixson; Phillip R. May Jr.; Samer Shamieh

Staff: Carrie Robison, Deputy Commissioner for Research and Sponsored Initiatives

AGENDA ITEM III.

Conversion of Endowed First-Generation Scholarship to Endowed Two-Year Workforce Scholarship: Northshore Technical Community College

Background Information

Board of Regents Support Fund policies for endowment matching programs permit the conversion of endowments from one type into another, provided the intended use of the converted endowment is allowable within existing BoRSF programs (e.g., an endowed chair into an endowed professorship).

Staff Summary

The at Northshore Technical Community College was initially established as a \$50,000 Scholarship in FY 2021–22. With approval of the original donor, NTCC requests to convert this scholarship into an Endowed Two-Year Workforce Scholarship named Weeks Marine Endowed Scholarship in Maritime Support Programs, with a corpus of \$50,000 (\$30,000 non-state/\$20,000 BoRSF).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Senior Staff recommends approval of Northshore Technical Community College’s request to convert the Weeks Marine 1st Generation Scholarship into an Endowed Two-Year Workforce Scholarship named Weeks Marine Endowed Scholarship in Maritime Support Programs, with a corpus of \$50,000.

AGENDA ITEM IV.

Board of Regents Support Fund (BoRSF) Plan and Budget, FY 2026–27

Background Information

The Board of Regents Support Fund (BoRSF), constitutionally designated and managed by the Board of Regents, receives revenues on an annual basis from the Kevin P. Reilly Louisiana Education Quality Trust Fund (LEQTF). These dollars, separate from State General Fund appropriations, cannot be used for operating costs but are designated to support supplementary and enhancing programs to improve the quality of higher education and contribute to Louisiana’s economic development. Accordingly, within the parameters set forth in the Constitution, the Board of Regents operates competitive programs and subprograms through the BoRSF appropriations, to bolster performance in priority areas through a variety of activities, including departmental enhancements, research and development, endowment matching, and targeted student support.

The Board is required by Article VII, Section 10 of the Constitution to submit an annual plan and budget to the Legislature and the Governor not less than 60 days prior to the beginning of the Regular Legislative Session. This document outlines proposals for expenditure across the four constitutionally permitted components of the Support Fund: Endowed Chairs for Eminent Scholars, Recruitment of Superior Graduate Students, Research and Development, and Enhancement. Though Act 222 of the 2025 Regular Legislative Session repeals the LEQTF and related BoRSF, a Plan and Budget is still required for FY 2026–27, pending approval of the constitutional amendment by the voters on May 16, 2026.

Staff Summary

Though the Revenue Estimating Conference (REC) provides the official revenue estimate for the Support Fund, staff considers both trends over the recent past and the annual projection of the Treasury. Annual revenues generated for the Support Fund declined steadily and significantly for the period FY 2006–07 through FY 2019–20, from a peak of \$35 million to less than \$18 million. In FY 2024–25, revenues rebounded above \$22 million, and current estimates indicate this improvement may continue.

Projections of the Treasurer and Revenue Estimating Conference are similar, ranging from \$21.75 million (Treasury, August 2025) to \$22.3 million (REC, May 2025); these projections are similar to FY 2024–25 earnings, which exceeded \$22 million.

Based on current estimates, recent earnings, and Support Fund history, the BoRSF Planning Committee concluded that \$22 million, with contingencies to accommodate potential shortfalls, is a reasonable budget level for the BoRSF in FY 2026–27. This recommended budget will enable full support for existing contracts and matching obligations and significant new monies for all BoRSF grant and endowment programs, which will help these programs recover from the contingencies put in place for FY 2025–26 to eliminate most competitive grant opportunities. The structure of the Support Fund, with RFPs released at the beginning of the fiscal year and funding allocated at the end, gives the Board ample opportunity to adjust as the budget picture clarifies in early 2027. If estimates fall below the recommended budget level, staff will make pro-rata reductions to new monies for competitive programs, in accordance with contingencies outlined in the Plan and Budget. Only under extreme exigency would federal matching dollars, guaranteed donor matches in Endowed Professorships (two slots per campus), or prior commitments be reduced.

Operating in this manner will minimize risk to this long-standing and highly valuable activity of the Board of Regents, allowing flexibility to adjust approaches over time. The contingencies recommended enable the Board and the staff to reassess and make necessary changes as the BoRSF's financial position continues to evolve.

Program allocations, as well as all contingencies in the event that revenues are higher or lower than projected, are detailed in Attachment A. Brief descriptions of each program/subprogram included in the budget are provided in Attachment B.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Senior Staff recommends approval of the FY 2026–27 BoRSF Plan and Budget, with contingencies, as presented.

AGENDA ITEM V.

Funding for BoRSF Existing Multi-Year Contracts and Federal Matching Commitments

Background Information

The Board of Regents Support Fund (BoRSF) has, throughout its 39 years of operations, funded grants and federal award matching across multiple fiscal years and is permitted by statute to contract projects for up to six years. Current programs offer up to five years of grant support and federal matching ranges from three to five years. Multi-year awards and matching are budgeted in each fiscal year of grant activity. **State matching commitments to federal awards are required to be maintained in full, so eliminating BoRSF support could either require the Legislature and Governor to identify other funding sources or relinquish the competitively awarded federal awards.**

Staff Summary

The proposed repeal of the Support Fund, passed in the 2025 Regular Legislative Session and scheduled for popular vote in May 2026, will eliminate the Board's ability to fulfill current multi-year obligations to these awards and matching pledges, which will have negative consequences for institutions across the state. Early termination of research grants stops work before results are known, damaging both scientific advancement and competitiveness for additional external funding.

Currently the BoRSF has 115 competitively selected, multi-year contracts totaling \$8,319,621 awarded in fiscal years beyond the date of repeal and six federal grants (awarded by the National Science Foundation, NASA, and the National Institutes of Health) with an existing \$4,000,000 in BoRSF match commitments. Sufficient monies are available in the BoRSF's unexpended earnings from prior years ("reserve funds") to cover these obligations in full. Staff recommends using reserve funds of \$13,000,000 to meet these existing multi-year commitments and minimize the impact of repeal on ongoing projects. Per Act 222 of the 2025 Regular Legislative Session, all remaining funds in the BoRSF account will be available to be liquidated to pay existing unaccrued liabilities in state retirement funds, subject to voter approval of the constitutional amendment.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Senior Staff recommends obligation of \$13,000,000 in unexpended BoRSF monies earned in prior fiscal years to fully fund existing multi-year and federal matching commitments awarded to Louisiana institutions through competitive award processes.

ATTACHMENT A

FY 2026–27 Board of Regents Support Fund Budget: BoRSF Planning Committee/Staff Recommendation

Support Fund Program/Subprogram	FY 2026–27 PROPOSED BUDGET		FY 2025–26 ADJUSTED BUDGET	
	Prior Commitments (Existing Obligations)	New Monies	Prior Commitments (Existing Obligations)	New Monies
Federal Matching	\$1,275,000	\$250,000	\$375,000	\$900,000
Endowed Chairs	\$0	\$3,220,000	\$0	\$2,020,000
Graduate Fellows	\$0	\$1,820,000	\$0	\$1,020,000
Traditional (GF)		\$0		\$0
BoR/SREB Fellowships		\$0		\$0
Endowed Grad Scholarships		\$1,820,000		\$1,020,000
Research & Development	\$1,283,441	\$2,750,000	\$3,324,204	\$2,090,000
Research Competitiveness	\$923,260	\$1,500,000	\$2,202,532	\$2,090,000
Industrial Ties/PoCP	\$360,181	\$800,000	\$1,121,672	SUSPENDED
Awds to Artists & Scholars	\$0	\$450,000	\$0	SUSPENDED
Enhancement	\$1,129,327	\$9,704,048	\$1,980,333	\$4,699,741
Departmental ENH (includes BoR/SREB)	\$1,129,327	\$5,814,048	\$1,980,333	SUSPENDED
Endowed Professorships	\$0	\$2,680,000	\$0	\$2,680,000
Endowed WF Scholarships	\$0	\$1,210,000	\$0	\$2,010,000
Administration (Formula)	\$0	\$568,184	\$0	\$590,722
TOTAL	\$3,687,768	\$18,312,232	\$5,679,537	\$11, 320,463
FISCAL YEAR BUDGET	\$22,000,000		\$17,000,000	

CONTINGENCIES:

Higher than Budgeted:

- Additional revenues allocated as approved by the Board
- No increase in spending authority

Lower than Budgeted

- If partial reductions are needed, proportionate cuts taken in first-year amounts allocated for proposals across all competitive programs and subprograms
- If additional cuts are needed after all competitive programs eliminated, reductions taken to the non-competitive Endowed Professorships subprogram once funding guarantees are met
- If additional cuts needed after all first-year funds are eliminated, reductions made to federal matching commitments and/or prior contractual obligations